

# Five Ways To Ship Products Like A Pro

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Successfully managing and completing the point of sale process is essential to long-term small business success. At one point or another you should *and most definitely will need to* consider partnering with a specialized order fulfillment company.

As a fledgling e-commerce or brick-and-mortar small business some may consider it sound practice and necessity to stock widgets in the kitchen or living room. The truth is, in order to scale for future growth it's time to overhaul logistics, shape up and learn to ship like a pro.

## Streamline Your Way to Customer Satisfaction

Once you've made the sale, invoiced and processed the order it's time to get your widgets out the door, down the street, across the state, over the sea and through the woods ... you get the idea. Without adequate systems it is easy to run into major logistical issues such as a lack of inventory, increased shipping lead times and in turn, unsatisfied customers.

Fortunately, there are ways to preclude logistical nightmares. The best way to get started is to streamline internal order management and outsource task related job functions. While it may seem cost effective to handle these tasks internally, the costs outweigh the benefit. The price of materials, time spent on labor and lack of specialization in managing and forecasting inventory can add up to no savings at all. The right fulfillment partner will decrease shipping lead times, improve rates and enable you to focus on the larger strategic picture. Ultimately, outsourcing your warehousing and shipping needs will increase efficiency and protect your bottom line.

## Questions to Ask a New Vendor

Shipping widgets from point A to point B is a smaller part of the way in which a small business manages its [supply chain](#). In order to effectively manage the process, order fulfillment companies provide simple user interfaces, easy to understand verbiage and online collaboration tools to take the guess work out of logistics.

Before choosing a fulfillment vendor, it's important to understand their basic service package, pricing structure, turnaround time (rate of frequency) and additional requirements such as minimums, contractual length and terms. Also, adequate knowledge of a vendor's basic fee structure, the ease in which you can pass on orders and their ability to scale from 20 shipments to 2,000 shipments per month is a vital consideration.

## Shape up and Ship on a Budget

While there are a multitude of warehouse and shipping options, not all of them are qualified to meet the needs of a startup or small business. If you are shipping business to business, business to consumer, wholesale, retail or e-commerce the right partner is priceless. Here are five companies that will shape up your small business and ship out your products like a pro:

**Fillship.com:** Store, sell and ship. Fillship.com makes it sound so simple. There is no cost to start and no inbound receiving fees. They will integrate with your shopping cart or POS system to transfer the order, pack and ship starting at \$39.99 per month plus shipping fees.

**SBwarehousing.com:** Small Business Warehousing promises to ship local and around the globe at a price that's easy on your wallet. SBwarehousing.com boasts no setup fees, no long-term contract, no hidden fees, and user-friendly pricing structures starting at \$25.00 per month.

**Webgistix.com:** No worries here, the process is much simpler than the company name. Formerly known as ifulfill.com, Webgistix.com allows you to sign-up online, integrate your shopping cart with their system, automatically transfer order data and pick, pack and ship your order within one business day. Pricing is available upon request.

**Shipwire.com:** You can store your widgets at their warehouse or your own location. Shipwire.com enables you to connect your back-end order management with their system to automate order notification and then they will pick, pack and ship for you. Shipwire.com also enables you to ship on your own using their website. You can take advantage of their free trial and get started at \$29.95 per month.

**Efulfillmentservice.com:** The name says it all. Apparently, they have a knack for e-commerce business. Efulfillmentservice.com offers inventory storage, order processing, fulfillment services, and returns service scalable to your individual business needs. They also promise no order volume minimums, no hidden fees and no long-term contracts. Pricing is available upon request.

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